The Ladder

September 50¢

purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications--this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

the Ladder

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THE LADDER is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.

contents

THIS MONTH'S ISSUE OF THE LADDER IS DEVOTED TO THE RESULTS OBTAINED FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE CIRCULATED BY THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, INC., IN JUNE OF 1958. MUCH CREDIT IS DUE THE MEMBERS OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER WHO SPENT LONG HOURS WORKING WITH THE DATA RECEIVED. TEXT WAS WRITTEN BY FLORENCE CONRAD AND THE GRAPHS WERE DRAWN BY EV HOWE. COMMENTS ON THIS ISSUE WILL BE MUCH APPRECIATED.

COVER BY JEAN RAY

DOB *questionnaire reveals*

SOME FACTS ABOUT LESBIANS

I. Introduction

In an effort to make a small beginning in the collection of descriptive data on Lesbians, THE LADDER in June of 1958 mailed out a four-page questionnaire to all subscribers, covering items of general information, family, and personal history. Of the more than 500 questionnaires sent out, 160 completed replies were received over the following 12 months, of which 157 were considered usable. The number of replies was disappointingly small, but the results have nevertheless been tabulated, analysed in part, and are presented herewith as having some interest, not only for the merely curious reader, but for those wishing to see an eventual extension of the meager knowledge now available in this field.

The purpose of the questionnaire was preliminary and exploratory. It was hoped (1) to gather some general data on Lesbians who probably do not otherwise come to the attention of the public or of researchers; (2) to gain some idea of the degree of response to such questionnaires by subscribers to THE LADDER; (3) to gain some experience in the framing and handling of the questionnaires, and (4) to stimulate interest by publication of results so as to encourage further research.

LIMITATIONS

No particular hypothesis or theory was meant to be tested by the questionnaire, though obviously certain questions (such as: Number of brothers or sisters? By whom reared? Favorite parent? etc.) were suggested by generally held conceptions as to what are important factors in human development. Even in the case of questions such as these, however, the smallness of the sample, and the absence of any "control" group, would make it impossible to rigor-

ously prove or disprove any particular proposition about Lesbians.

Certain weaknesses in the survey should be pointed out: Several questions proved to be ambiguous, and were apparently interpreted in varying ways by persons responding. This was especially true, for instance, of the questions involving the word "relationships", as in homosexual or heterosexual relationships, where either a general or a specific sexual meaning might have been read. Where it was possible to correct answers to make interpretations consistent, this was done; but this was of course not often possible.

Such items as "do you consider yourself well-adjusted?" and "was it difficult to adjust to your homosexuality?" were undoubtedly interpreted in varying ways, and answered with varying degrees of self-knowledge, by respondents. Other possible ambiguities or difficulties in questions will be pointed out as the results are discussed.

The sample is not only small, but it is neither scientifically selected nor truly random. It is actually a selected group, partly self-selected, consisting of those women who (1) had contact with the DOB, and (2) were willing to supply the type of information requested. We believe that a description of this group, however imperfect it may be, is not without interest. It cannot be known, as already pointed out, how far it is or is not representative of Lesbians in general. As will be seen, it is a quite different type of group from that usually studied by doctors and criminologists.

II. Type of Group Represented

The group is of course female (the few male entries received were discarded), almost entirely Caucasian, largly of U.S. citizenship, born or reared in varying (40) states of the Union or (10) foreign countries. The bulk - almost three-quarters of the group - come from urban rather than rural backgrounds. Ages vary from 19 to 62, with a median age of 32 years. (See Table 1)

The educational level of the group is high: - 82% completed

AGE IN YEARS	NO. OF PERSONS
UNDER 20	1
20-25	35
26-30	31
31-35	34
36-40	31
OVER 40	25
	157

TABLE 1. AGE DISTRIBUTION

four years of high school, 46% have had four years of college, 66% have had some college, 16% reported college work beyond the fourth year.

For comparison with the educational level of the general population, Census Bureau figures on white females are most relevant (since only one of the present group reported being non-white). These indicate that in 1957 only 45% of white females over 25 for the U.S. as a whole had completed four years of high school, and only 6% four years of college.

Table 2 below shows the tabulation of replies from our survey.

NO. YEARS ATTENDED	NO. OF PERSONS REPORTING ATTENDANCE AT: HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
0	1	52
UP TO 1	1	12
2	3	18
3	17	17
4	129	26
OVER 4	-	25
"SOME"	6	6
NO REPLY	-	1
	157	157

TABLE 2. EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

The high educational level of our group is no doubt partly related to income, which will be referred to later.

College grades of the group are extremely high: Of all those reporting any college attendance, 78% had average grades of A or B, 11% being straight A; C's were earned by 15% and D's by just 2%. (See Fig. 1) So-called "normal" distributions of student grades usually show in the neighborhood of 5% or so each receiving A's or F's, around 25% each earning B's and D's and something like 40% receiving C's.

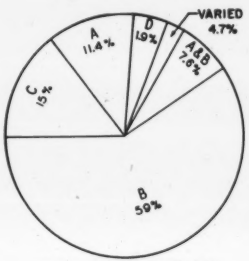

FIG. I-DISTRIBUTION OF COLLEGE GRADES

INCOME LEVEL

The income level of the group is also above average: The median monthly wage of those reporting specific income figures (about 85% of the total sample did so) is $350, or $4200 annually. This compares with a 1957 median annual income for white income-earning females over 14, nation-wide, of only $1310. (The nation-wide median for those working full-time and year-round is $3097, and would probably be still higher if the 14-20 year olds could be excluded. But we have no assurance that all the present group work full-time the year-round.) Fig. 2 gives the distribution of persons in our survey by income bracket.

OCCUPATIONS

A variety of occupations is represented (see Fig. 3). The professional group is more numerous than any other (38% of the total); while clerical workers are second with 33% of the total. (The percentage of clerical workers is about the same as that for the white employed female population in general; however the professional representation in our group is much heavier than it is for the nation: In 1958 professional and semi-professional workers amounted to only 13% of white employed females, com-

pared with 44% in our group.) Over 6% of the present group are students, and about 6% work at trades, skilled or unskilled.

While no member of the group is presently in the armed services, about 18% have at one time been a member. Although we have no directly comparable figures for the female population in general, this appears to be a high proportion: In 1945, at the peak of military strength, only 1/2 of 1% of the total female population 21 years of age or over was on active duty in the military services. Since that time the percentage has dropped to a more 0.06%. It therefore appears quite unlikely that the proportion of all American women now living who have ever been in the services could be anything but a small fraction of our 18%.

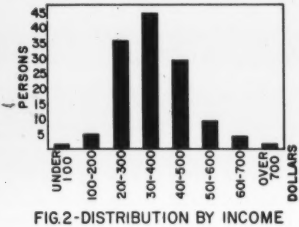

FIG.2-DISTRIBUTION BY INCOME

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

What appears to be a high proportion of the group own property (37%); while 29% report owning their own homes. Of those renting, less than 1/3 live in furnished quarters. The character of the group is further indicated by the following facts: Over 80% are registered voters; the average "period of residence at present address" is over five years; the "longest period of employment" averages over six years. Further, 89% reported good or excellent credit ratings, and a number of the remainder had no rating (no use of credit). Over half the group (85) reported belonging to business, professional, fraternal or social organizations of a wide variety. Most of these belong to more than one organization, and 17 persons mention five or more organizations.

On the other hand, only seven of the entire group have

ever served jury duty and only three own their own business. Just 28% report working in a supervisory capacity. These figures, as well as those in the preceding paragraph, would become more significant if they could be compared with figures for the total female population.

GENERAL IMPRESSION

Nevertheless, what has been said may give a general impression of the kind of group responding to the questionnaire. It appears to be, on the average, relatively well-educated, above average in income, relatively high in professional workers, and living a relatively stable, responsible mode of life by certain conventional, if superficial, standards. There are of course some atypical replies: One individual has been a prostitute; two are reformed users of narcotics; four report themselves as reformed alcoholics and one as presently so. In addition 11 were at one time (mostly for brief periods) committed to a mental hospital; and 19 (12% of the total) have been arrested (most commonly for drunkenness and traffic violations). See Section IV below for more on personal history.

III. Family Background

The group's family background appears fairly conventional: The great majority (87%) were reared by their parents, and three-quarters of these by both parents; in most cases (64%) the father was the sole wage-earner. Of the small group reared by other than their own parents, most were reared by relatives. Where only one parent raised the child, it was in most cases (27 out of 34) the mother. These cases of single-parent rearing, however, were due twice as often to divorce or separation

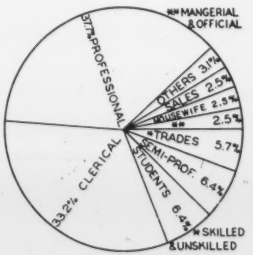

FIG.3-DISTRIBUTION BY TYPES OF OCCUPATION

as they were due to death.

About 60% of persons responding considered their family income to be "average", but this may overstate the proportion of families actually close to the "average" family income. Only 9% thought their family income was "below average".

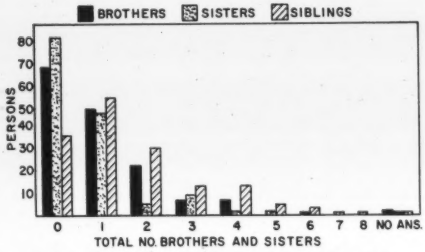

FIG. 4-NO. OF BROTHERS, SISTERS, & SIBLINGS

Occupations of fathers seem to suggest above average total income: About a quarter of the fathers were engaged in a trade. Professional and semi-professional work claimed 23%. A somewhat smaller percentage was engaged in sales, and a similar-sized group owned their own business. This is a considerably lighter concentration in trades, and a heavier concentration in professions than is found nationwide among white males today or in recent years, as shown by Census data.

Religious background is not exceptional: 75% of parents were Protestant; 22% Catholic; 5% Jewish (eight mixed marriages account for these totals). This compares with nation-wide proportions for the total 1957 population of 14 yrs. and over as follows: 66% Protestant; 26% Catholic; 3% Jewish; 5% other or not reported.

Of somewhat more interest, though not startling, is the fact that there was considerable falling-away from the parental religion: Subjects reported being Protestant in only 50% of the cases, Catholic in 19%, Jewish in 2%,

other in 6%, none or agnostic in 23%. (About 60% of the group reported they did receive religious training at home.)

Further indications of the type of family background are given by the following: Only a small proportion of parents had ever been committed to mental hospitals (under 5%), or had used narcotics (1.3%). A somewhat greater proportion had at one time been arrested (10%), and still more (23%) had been alcoholics, according to their children.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Information on number of brothers and sisters is given in Fig. 4. This chart shows three things: (1) distribution of the group by number of brothers reported; (2) the same information for sisters; and (3) the same information for brothers and/or sisters (siblings). Some interesting points appear from this data:

With regard to siblings of either sex, the largest number of persons (55) reported having just one; the next largest number (35) had none - that is about 22% of the group were "only children"; and the third largest number (30) had two. The "average" woman responding had 1.7 siblings. This means the "average" respondent came from a family of 2.7 children. While it is quite difficult to make valid comparisons with nation-wide data, we believe this is not exceptionally low for a largely urban group.

Comparison of total number of brothers with total number of sisters is unusually interesting: Many more brothers were reported than sisters - in fact a total of 148 brothers compared to 116 sisters. But this is not itself surprising, considering that the 157 respondents themselves are all female. Thus, if one adds to the number of sisters the total number of women reporting, the sex ratio of children in the families concerned is seen to be 148 boys to 273 girls. This is a ratio of 52 boys for each 100 girls, which is extremely low for boys. Sex ratio figures for the general population are never this low, in any age group. The nation-wide ratio, except among the oldest age groups, usually remains very close to 100. If our sample were larger, this finding would raise interesting questions.

A past preference for one parent over the other was report-

ed by a majority (63%) of the subjects. More interesting is the fact that of these, 55 out of 99 preferred the mother, only 36 preferred the father; and the rest had changing preferences. One factor in this preference (though certainly not the only one) might be alcoholism in the father: A substantial number of the "favorite mothers" (21) lived with alcoholic fathers.

It is also of interest that 38% of respondents counted their adolescence as "average" in happiness - about the same proportion as that which counted theirs "unhappy". Only about a quarter of the group considered theirs as "happy". There can only be speculation on the meaning of these percentages, in the absence of any control group. One would expect, though, that adolescence for a largely deviant group such as this might be less happy than the average; and one is struck rather by the considerable number who did not reply "unhappy".

To the question as to family knowledge of subject's homosexuality, as many as 40% replied their families did know. (Another 10% were in doubt.) Of those whose families knew, well over half were told by the subject; a still greater proportion of such families as knew (about 3/4) "accepted" the fact. A few rather illuminating comments were volunteered on this subject by some respondents:

> "I am quite certain they know of my homosexuality, but it is never discussed, for they understand nothing but normality. They refuse to think of it at all."

Another subject says:

> "...both (referring to two members of the family) have permitted themselves through the years...to believe what they want to believe, not to see what they don't want to see...."

Other homosexuals in the family were reported by a rather small proportion of the group (14%). Of the 35 relatives mentioned, nine were cousins, six sisters, five brothers, five aunts. In some cases subjects volunteered the information that there was no "learning" of homosexual practices

from the other family member. One interesting case with a homosexual sister reports:

> "My sister and I did not influence each other in any way toward homosexuality. We were quite surprised to learn it about each other after we were already practicing it."

Of course the lack of mutual influence does not exclude the possibility that similar influences were operating on both children.

CONCLUSIONS REGARDING FAMILY HISTORY

In all, the family history material shows some, but surprisingly little, of the disturbance usually thought to be associated with deviant personality development. We recognize, however, that the questionnaire was limited to very general items, and was, perhaps inevitably, superficial. Further information and detail, for example on the psychosexual identification of the child, on attitudes of the child toward each parent, on parents' conformity or lack of conformity to cultural sex stereotypes, would be of great interest.

IV. Personal History

It has so far been only implied that the group is predominantly homosexual. More exactly, the group by its own judgment leans heavily toward the homosexual side of the heterosexual-homosexual balance (the concept developed by Kinsey). We have used the Kinsey heterosexual-homosexual rating scale in this survey, but have not ourselves attempted, as Kinsey did, to place each individual on the scale in accordance with objective information supplied by her. Nor was any attempt made, as was done in Kinsey's two volumes on sexual behavior, to rate individuals for each year of their lives on which information was collected.

The figures in Table 3, therefore, refer to subjects' own evaluation as to where on the scale they feel they belong. In view of the wording of the question, and judging also from some of the written comments, it seems probable that most subjects answered in the present tense. However there

may have been some difference of interpretation on this score, and a few may have taken into account their entire past life. The rating scale, with the number and percentage of persons placing themselves in each category, is as follows:

	NO. OF PERSONS	%
EXCLUSIVELY HETEROSEXUAL, WITH NO HOMOSEXUALITY	0	0
PREDOMINANTLY HETEROSEXUAL, ONLY INCIDENTALLY HOMOSEXUAL	4	2.5
PREDOMINANTLY HETEROSEXUAL, BUT MORE THAN INCIDENTALLY HOMOSEXUAL	6	4
EQUALLY HETEROSEXUAL AND HOMOSEXUAL	4	2.5
PREDOMINANTLY HOMOSEXUAL, BUT MORE THAN INCIDENTALLY HETEROSEXUAL	8	5
PREDOMINANTLY HOMOSEXUAL, BUT INCIDENTALLY HETEROSEXUAL	35	22
EXCLUSIVELY HOMOSEXUAL	100	64
	157	100

TABLE 3. HOMOSEXUAL-HETEROSEXUAL SCALE

The relation between this self-evaluation, marital status, and extent of heterosexual relations, is of some interest: It can be seen that of this group 91% consider themselves to be more homosexual than heterosexual - that is, place themselves more than halfway down the scale. Yet as many as 43 persons, or 27%, are either now married or were once married. (See Fig. 5) Along the same line, while 100 persons count themselves as exclusive homosexuals, as many as 98 reported some heterosexual relationships.* These 98 must, and do, include a number of persons rated as exclusive homosexuals.

The most obvious explanation for this relatively high degree of marital history and heterosexual experience is, of course, that the heterosexual-homosexual balance changes over the years. Kinsey's concept of this balance involves conscious psychological reactions and overt behavior; and

presumably the subjects of the present survey were also reporting on conscious reactions. Thus a changing homosexual-heterosexual balance might reflect a growing awareness over the years of one's homosexual component.

OTHER REASONS FOR MARRIAGE

There are, however, other explanations for the relatively high percentage of persons with marital history. A slight majority of the once married group (24 persons, or 55%) knew they were homosexual when they married. Why then did they marry? Nine had homosexual husbands - apparently marriages of convenience. (But even in these cases many reported some heterosexual experience - whether or not within the marriage is not known.) The reasons given for marriage, where subjects' homosexuality was known at the time, are of considerable interest. Only five of the 24 persons mentioned love or physical attraction as the reason. Here are some examples of the other reasons mentioned:

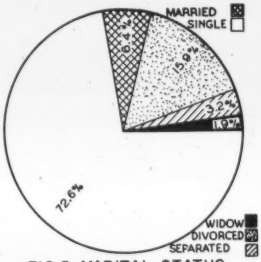

FIG. 5-MARITAL STATUS

"Wished to please parents and family"
"I would not accept the truth"

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* As already stated, the word "relationship" is ambiguous. The replies probably overstate the number of relationships involving actual sexual intercourse. Also, some, but not all respondents, seem to have interpreted it as meaning the number of acts of intercourse, regardless of whether all were with the same person. Where possible, we tried to adjust replies to reflect number of persons with whom there was a relationship involving intercourse.

"I didn't know my own mind"
"To get away from home"
"To straighten out"
"Bored"
"Convenience"
"Concealment - hunger for social acceptance"
"Family satisfaction"
"To see if I could lead a normal or heterosexual life" (This case rates herself as an exclusive homosexual)
"To prove to myself as well as to others that I was not homosexual" (This case also rates herself as an exclusive homosexual)

These reasons speak for themselves. A few volunteered comments add further light on the attitude of some women homosexuals to heterosexual experience:

(I had four heterosexual experiences because)..."I wished to be certain that I received no satisfaction sexually from a male..." (This from a woman who married to please her family, and rates herself an exclusive homosexual.)

"I enjoy sex with either men or women physically, but have never been in love with any man (except for present therapist!)" (This case rates herself now as predominantly homosexual.)

It is also interesting that, in addition to the 43 persons once married, an additional 60 have at some time considered

FREQUENCY OF DRINKING	NO. OF PERSONS
VERY OCCASIONALLY (ONCE EVERY 2-3 MOS. OR LESS)	20
OCCASIONALLY (1-2 TIMES PER MONTH)	35
"SOCIALLY" (1-2 TIMES PER WEEK)	53
ONCE A DAY	21
FREQUENTLY, OR HEAVILY	5
	134

TABLE 4. FREQUENCY OF DRINKING

leading a heterosexual life. Thus only about 1/3 of the group never considered such a life. The degree of seriousness with which this prospect was considered is not known, of course; it may reflect only the ever-present pressure of social expectations.

Less than 15% of the group (21 persons) report having had children, of whom 14 rate themselves as being (at present) exclusive or nearly exclusive homosexuals. Most of these have only one child (though one individual, rating herself now as an exclusive homosexual, has four).

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-WORKERS

The group is not on the whole exclusive in regard to acquaintances: About 30% report a majority of their friends to be homosexual. The largest number - about 50% - have friends about evenly balanced between homosexuals and heterosexuals. The remaining 20%, with a majority of heterosexual friends, may represent those whose sexual preferences are most hidden and who are not acquainted with the "homosexual community".

More light on the degree of "obviousness" of the group is shed by the fact that very few persons (only six) could say that most of their fellow-workers knew of their homosexuality. A slight majority of the rest reported that some fellow-workers knew; for as many as 61 (nearly 40% of the entire group), no fellow-workers knew. In those cases where any fellow-workers knew, a slight majority had been told by the subjects themselves. Where fellow-workers did know, in the great majority of cases (close to 90%), they "accepted" the fact, in the opinion of the subjects.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL HABITS

No subject reported being a user of narcotics, though as already reported, two said they were "reformed". As previously stated, there are four reformed "alcoholics" and one present alcoholic.

Drinking to some degree is indulged in by 134, or 85% of the group. Detail on frequency of drinking is presented in Table 4.

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There may be some question as to how many of the "once a day" replies belong in the last category of frequent or heavy drinkers, since no check-list was given in the questionnaire. At the worst, however, this data presents a picture considerably different from the stereotype of homosexuals as heavy drinkers. A geographical breakdown, not possible with our present data, might perhaps indicate that the heavy-drinking stereotype is more nearly approximated in some sections of the country. (It is even possible that drinking habits correlate more closely with geographic and social situation than with sexual preference as such. Where homosexuals drink heavily, do they do so for social rather than psychological reasons?)

Frequency of attending "gay" bars is indicated in Table 5. Eighty persons out of the 157 reported they did frequent such bars. As can be seen, the largest group of those who go at all attend once or twice a month; but almost as many go less frequently than that. Here again a geographic breakdown would be interesting, but is not possible with our present data.

FREQUENCY OF ATTENDING	NO. OF PERSONS
SELDOM (ONCE EVERY FEW MONTHS OR LESS)	31
OCCASIONALLY (1-2 TIMES PER MONTH)	34
ONCE OR TWICE PER WEEK	13
NIGHTLY	2
	80

TABLE 5. FREQUENCY OF ATTENDING HOMOSEXUAL BARS

SEXUAL LIFE

The vast majority of the group has had homosexual experience - there are only four (possibly five) exceptions.

(There is some ambiguity in the use of the word "experience," though probably less than there was in the word "relationship". "Experience" may be broad enough to mean to some people emotional relations with no physical contact, or varying degrees of contact. In a few cases, subjects speci-

fied that their experience was of a limited kind; it seems likely that where no such limitation was made, the "experience" at least reached the point of intimate physical contact.)

Earliest homosexual experiences ranged from the age of 6 to 44. As Table 6 below shows, the largest number of per-

AGE	NO. OF PERSONS
5-10 YEARS	7
11-15 YEARS	24
16-20 YEARS	64
21-30 YEARS	49
31-40 YEARS	5
OVER 40	1
NONE	4
NO ANSWER	3
	157

TABLE 6. AGE AT FIRST HOMOSEXUAL EXPERIENCE

sons had their first experience between the ages of 16 and 20; the mean age was between 19 and 20. This average is just barely higher than the average age of the first heterosexual experience, which fell between 18 and 19. The range of years for first heterosexual experience is somewhat smaller than it was for first homosexual experience, running from 5 to 30 years.

Examining individual cases shows that where an individual has had both heterosexual and homosexual experience, the first heterosexual preceded the first homosexual experience in more instances than not. However, the edge is only slight:

	No. of Cases
First homosexual preceded first heterosexual experience	42
First heterosexual preceded first homosexual experience	48
First heterosexual and first homosexual experience at same age	7

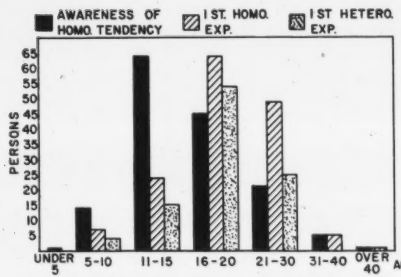

FIG.6-AGE OF FIRST AWARENESS, FIRST HOMOSEXUAL EXP. & FIRST HETEROSEXUAL EXP.

First awareness of homosexual tendencies occurred on the whole earlier than actual experience, as would be expected. The age range for awareness is from 4½ years to 44 years, with more persons becoming aware in the 11 to 15 year bracket than in any other age bracket. The mean age, however, is between 16 and 17.

These relationships are shown in Fig. 6, which compares the age distribution for earliest awareness of homosexual tendencies, first homosexual experience, and first heterosexual experience.

(There is considerable ambiguity in the phrase "awareness of homosexual tendencies." It seems likely that some persons may have taken this to mean awareness of deviant psycho-sexual identification, rather than awareness of attraction to the same sex. Still other interpretations may have been made, but it is not altogether useless to have this estimate of earliest awareness of some kind of deviation from the expected sex role.)

A large majority of the group (72%) is presently engaged

in a homosexual relationship. A smaller majority (59%) have had homosexual relationships of "some permanency" prior to this one. The length of the present relationship is shown in Table 7 below:

LENGTH	NO. OF PERSONS
UNDER 1 YEAR	22
1-3 YEARS	40
4-6 YEARS	30
7-9 YEARS	5
10 YEARS OR OVER	16
	113

TABLE 7. LENGTH OF PRESENT HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

The range of duration is from "just began" to 20 years, with an average duration of between four and five years. One of the important variables in a question of this kind is of course age; we therefore show in Table 8 a breakdown of this material by age bracket:

AGE IN YEARS	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	OVER 40
LENGTH					
UNDER 1 YR.	5	7	7	2	1
1-3 YRS.	12	9	9	6	4
4-6 YRS.	6	7	8	6	3
7-9 YRS.	1	0	2	1	1
10 & OVER	0	1	0	8	7
NO REPLY	(12)	(7)	(8)	(8)	(9)
	36	31	34	31	25

TOTAL: 157

TABLE 8. LENGTH OF PRESENT HOMOSEXUAL RELATION BY AGE BRACKET

As would be expected, some correlation with age can be seen, though it is by no means perfect. Each of the first three age groups, up to age 35, show a clustering of replies around the 1-3 duration. But above age 35 the distribution becomes bimodal; that is the largest number of persons of each age group report rela-

tionships of 10 years or over, but there are other relatively large groups in the one to three year or the four to six year category.

Material on length of longest homosexual relationship was also gathered, and the results are shown in Table 9. The range here is from four months to 20 years, with a mean duration of between five and six years.

LENGTH	NO. OF PERSONS
UNDER 1 YEAR	16
1-3 YEARS	49
4-6 YEARS	47
7-9 YEARS	15
10 YRS. OR OVER	22
NO REPLY	8
	157

TABLE 9. LENGTH OF LONGEST HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONSHIP

Here again, a breakdown by age is relevant; and this is shown in Table 10. Results, as can be seen, are somewhat comparable to the material on length of present relationship. Age groups up to 30 cluster around the 1-3 year duration, and the 30-35 year group is concentrated in the 4-6 year duration. The age groups above 35 again show a bimodal distribution, with the

AGE IN YEARS	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	OVER 40
LENGTH					
UNDER 1 YR.	9	1	4	1	1
1-3 YRS.	17	13	7	6	6
4-6 YRS.	8	12	16	5	6
7-9 YRS.	1	1	7	3	3
10 YRS. & OVER	0	1	0	13	8
NO REPLY	(1)	(3)	(0)	(3)	(1)
	36	31	34	31	25

TOTAL: 157

TABLE 10. LENGTH OF LONGEST HOMOSEXUAL RELATION, BY AGE BRACKET

largest single groups in the "10 years or over" category.

Homosexual relationships of short duration were reported by 124 (or close to 80%) of the total. These ranged in number all the way up to a reported "hundreds", with, however, the largest number claiming between one and five short relationships. The distribution is shown in Fig. 7.

SIGNIFICANCE OF FIGURES

The significance of these figures on number and duration of homosexual experiences is not clear; we know of no directly comparable statistics. Kinsey in "Sexual Behavior in the Human Female" reported figures on total number of years involved in homosexual contacts, and total number of partners involved. It might be of interest to gather similar information in any future survey conducted by the DOB.

The present statistics do appear to show, at any rate, that lasting homosexual relationships, though not universal in the group, are not only possible but by no means rare.

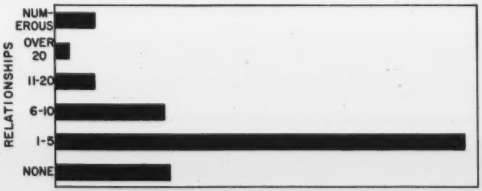

FIG.7-NO. OF HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS OF SHORT DURATION

HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Some reference was made earlier to the number of persons reporting heterosexual relationships. Table 11 gives the distribution of replies according to number of relationships. Of those in the first bracket (1-3 relationships), about a third, or 20 persons, have had only one relationship.

NO. RELATIONSHIPS	NO. OF PERSONS
1-3	59
4-9	14
10 & OVER)	
OR "MANY")	11
UNSPECIFIED	14
	98

TABLE 11. NUMBER OF HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS

SEX ROLE VARIES

Of considerable interest was the question: "In your homosexual relationship(s) do you consider yourself predominantly feminine, masculine, or neither?" Replies indicated (See Fig. 8) a close balance between those answering "neither" and those answering "masculine" - each answer accounting for more than 1/3 of the replies.

These replies lend some support to the common idea that there is considerable masculine identification among Lesbians. What is of special interest, though, is the fact that, while over 20% claimed a feminine identification, over a third refused either label. The question referred only to the role taken in homosexual relations; and answers might have been different had the question been worded more generally. It should also be noticed that the question was put in the present tense. It would be of great interest to know how psycho-sexual identification changed, if at all, over the subjects' lives, and what reasons could be given for such changes.

There were a number of comments on this question worthy of remark. More than one person indicated that her feelings of "masculinity" or "femininity" depended on the type of partner. Several indicated that, though "feminine" in type themselves, they were attracted to equally "feminine" partners; in one case at least this led to disappointment, since the "feminine" girls to whom she was attracted preferred other types.

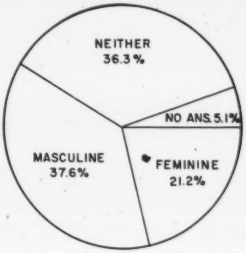

FIG. 8-PREDOMINANT ROLE IN HOMOSEXUAL RELATIONS

A number of persons indicated specifically that they recognized both "masculine" and "feminine" elements in themselves. It is probable that a large majority of persons, Lesbian and otherwise, have such a mixture of elements, but that awareness of this mixture, as well as the mixture itself, varies from person to person. It also seems likely that awareness of either the "masculine" or the "feminine" qualities may be heightened by contrast with a partner who has a different combination of them.

ADJUSTMENT

The questions on "adjustment" indicate of course only the subjects' own evaluations, which are not without some value, if given honestly. For what it may be worth, 64% indicated they had not found it difficult to adjust to their homosexuality. A still larger proportion (83%) considered themselves to be well-adjusted now; and 92% reported that they "get along well with people in general". These questions might be improved in the future so as to permit better discrimination in the reply, or to provide objective criteria for a reply.

Incidentally, less than 30% of the group (45 persons) reported having had psychotherapy. Something less than

three-quarters of the remainder felt they had no need for it. Less than 10% indicated they would like to have therapy.

SUMMARY OF PERSONAL HISTORY

The personal data shows a group with a high homosexual component, both on self-rating and on the basis of actual experience, but with more heterosexual experience than might have been guessed. It is a group whose members consider themselves, on the whole, to be well adjusted, a large majority of whom have not had, and do not want, psychotherapy. Many more of them than not have friends well divided as between homosexuals and heterosexuals. Fellow-workers of the overwhelming majority do not know of their sexual orientation. The group as a whole does not conform to the stereotype with respect to heavy drinking and continuous attendance at "gay" bars. Their sex identification in homosexual relations lends some, but not much, support to the stereotyped "butch" picture. There was considerable awareness among them of a mixture of "masculine" and "feminine" qualities. The data on length and number of homosexual relationships does not by itself permit of any significant conclusions, except that durable relations, while not the rule in the group, are certainly not uncommon.

V. Concluding Comments

Whether the results of the present survey warrant further research by the DOB is a question that will have to be decided in coming months. Further analysis of present results will be made in any case. Numerous ways of improving on the present study, and kinds of further information which might be sought (some of which have been mentioned here) have occurred to the committee. We would welcome opinions, reactions, and suggestions from any readers. We hope that those readers in particular who may have special training or knowledge about the subjects covered or methods of handling the data will offer comments.

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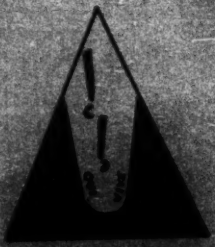
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